

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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UNCLAS USUN 3193

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PARM, XO, UN

SUBJ: AMERASINGHE PRESS BRIEFING ON IOPZ

REF: USUN 3107

1. AT A PRESS BRIEFING JUNE 27 CHAIRMAN AMERASINGHE OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE (IOPZ) SAID THE RESPONSE FROM THE US, USSR, UK, AND FRANCE TO HIS RECENT OVERTURES HAS BEEN "MOST DISAPPOINTING AND DISCOURAGING." HE SAID HE HAD NOT ACUTALLY HEARD FROM THE USSR YET, BUT DID NOT THINK THEIR ATTITUDE WOULD BE ANY DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER THREE. AMERASINGHE CHARACTERIZED THE REFUSAL OF ALL THE BIG POWERS EXCEPT CHINA AND JAPAN EVEN TO TALK TO HIS COMMITTEE AS A VIOLATION OF THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE UN CHARTER.

2. TEXT OF THE OPI REPORT OF THE AMERASINGHE BRIEFING FOLLOWS:

QUOTE:

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MR. AMERAGINGHE CHOSE THE END OF THE FIRST SERIES OF MEETINGS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE INDIAN OCEAN PLUS FIVE INFORMAL SESSIONS BETWEEN THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP OF LITTORAL AND HINTERLAND STATES, TO EXPRESS HIS DISAPPOINTMENT PARTICULARLY AT THE ATTITUDE OF THE BIG POWERS - THE UNITED STATES, SOVIET UNION, FRANCE, BRITAIN SPECIFICALLY - IN NOT COOPERATING WITH THE COMMITTEE. HE FIRST DESCRIBED THE MANDATE GIVEN THE COMMITTEE BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THEN BEGAN BY NOTING THAT CHINA AND JAPAN AMONG BIG POWERS HAD COOPERATED WITH THE COMMITTEE - "CHINA IN STRIKING CONTRAST TO OTHER GREAT POWERS," HE SAID THE COMMITTEE HAS TRIED TO ENGAGE THE INTEREST OF THE OTHER FOUR GREAT POWERS AND OTHER MARITIME USERS BY CALLING ON THEM TO GIVE "TANGIBLE" APPROVAL TO THE IDEA OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE. HE REGRETS VERY MUCH THAT THE RESPONSE OF ALL FOUR HAS BEEN "MOST DISAPPOINTING AND DISCOURAGING." HE HAS HEARD BACK FROM THE UNITED STATES, GREAT BRITAIN, AND FRANCE ON HIS REQUEST, BUT THE SOVIET UNION HAS NOT RESPONDED BUT HE DOESN'T THINK THEIR ATTITUDE WOULD BE ANY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER GREAT POWERS. THE COMMITTEE APPROACH IS ONE CONCERNED WITH GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT IN THE AREA, AND THE GREAT POWERS, HE ASSERTED, THINK THIS IS INTERFERENCE WITH FREEDOM OF THE HIGH SEAS. HE DOES NOT AGREE "IF THEY MEAN FREEDOM OF LICENSE THEN THEY ARE CORRECT," HE SAID. THE COMMITTEE HAS NOT INTENTION WHATSOEVER OF INTERFERING WITH THE PEACEFUL USES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN, HE STRESSED. THE DECLARATION STRESSES UNHAMPERED USE OF THE OCEAN. THE COMMITTEE DOES NOT SEE THIS IN CONFLICT WITH THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A ZONE OF PEACE. THE COMMITTEE IS ALARMED AT THE PRESENCE OF THE GREAT POWERS IN THE OCEAN BECAUSE OF THE DANGER OF AN ARMS RACE, AND WANTS TO REDUCE TENSION OF THAT NATURE IN THE AREA. IN APPROACHING THE GREAT POWERS TO ENGAGE IN THE COMMITTEE DIALOGUE, AMERASINGHE SAID "WE WERE ACTING ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT IT IS THE DUTY OF EVERY MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO COOPERATE TO PROMOTE INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY." BY REFUSING TO TALK WITH THE COMMITTEE, THEREFORE, THE GREAT POWERS ARE NOT ACTING WITHIN THE LETTER AND SPIRIT OF THE UN CHARTER. THE COMMITTEE WANTED THEIR PRESENCE TO ASCERTAIN WHAT THEIR PROPOSALS ARE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE DECLARATION AND IF POSSIBLE TO MEET THEIR CONCERNS AND THEN UNCLASSIFIED

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PROCEED STEP BY STEP. IT WAS NEVER THE INTENTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO TRANSFER THE INDIAN OCEAN OVERNIGHT INTO A ZONE OF PEACE BUT THEY WANTED TO COOPERATE IN A DIALOG. IF THE GREAT POWERS WON'T EVEN EXTEND THE COURTESY OF EXPLAINING THEIR POSITION TO THE COMMITTEE "WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO PROCEED." IN THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:
-- TO MAKE THE INDIAN OCEAN A ZONE OF PEACE IT WOULD BE

NECESSARY FIRST TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY BY DISCOURAGING MILITARY ALLIANCES IN THE AREA. "WE RULE OUT ANYTHING THAT SMACKS OF MILITARY ALLIANCE OF COUNTRIES IN THE REGION WITH GREAT POWERS OUTSIDE THE REGIONA," HE DSAID. SECOND, THE COMMITTEE WANTS TO CREATE CONDITIONS OF MUTUAL TRUST IN THE ZONE SO THAT COUNTRIES IN THE AREA FEEL THEIR SECURITY IS AN EFFECTIVE ALLIANCE AGAINST OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE.

-- ASKED IF THE OPENING OF THE SUEZ CANAL PUTS MORE PRESSURE ON ACHIEVING A ZONE OF PEACE, AND CREATES MORE DIFFICULTIES AMERASINGHE SAID "IT WOULD APPEAR BY THE STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES THAT THERE ARE PROBLEMS."

HE SAID IT WAS NOT NECESSARY FOR HIM TO ELABORATE THAT NAVAL EXPERTS SHOULD BE ASKED. HE SAID THAT THE OPENING OF THE CANAL REDUCES SAILING TIME FROM THE BLACK SEA TO THE INDIAN OCEAN "AND IT SEEMS TO HAVE CAUSED GREAT CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES." ON THE SUBJECT OF DIEGO CARCIA, AMERASINGHE SAID THIS IS A SERIOUS SITUATION AND THE GROUP HOPED TO COME UP WITH REASONS WHY BUILDING UP A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT THERE WOULD BE UNNECESSARY. HE SAID THE LIST OF LITTORAL AND HINTELAND STATES HAD BEEN COMPILED ON A FAIR BASIS, AND ANY STATES INADVERTENTLY ELIMINATED IN MARCH 1973 WHEN THE LIST WAS MADE UP HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO THE LIST. HE SAID THAT SOUTH AFRICA SEEMED MORE RELATED TO THE ATLANTIC OCEAN AREA THAN THE INDIAN OCEAN SO WAS NOT INCLUDED, AND ISRAEL WAS NOT DIRECTLY CONCERNED IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. HE SAID SEVERAL TIMES THAT NOTHING WAS INTENDED BY ELIMINATING THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND IF THEY CHOSE TO BE RECONSIDERED THEY COULD APPLY AND THE COMMITTEE F*0 FFP"/QUFD@FPBP(W(*GUQ7@F@F0M!\$\$& A(\$YCT-GJJC7QI7,L

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